


2018

Historical Representation of Jackie Robinson Within Primary and Intermediate Level Trade Books

Amy Minor

Central Grade School (Effingham IL)

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/the_councilor

 Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Elementary Education Commons](#), [Elementary Education and Teaching Commons](#), [Junior High, Intermediate, Middle School Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Pre-Elementary, Early Childhood, Kindergarten Teacher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Minor, Amy (2018) "Historical Representation of Jackie Robinson Within Primary and Intermediate Level Trade Books," *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*: Vol. 79 : No. 1 , Article 2.
Available at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/the_councilor/vol79/iss1/2

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies by an authorized editor of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.



Historical Representation of Jackie Robinson Within Primary and Intermediate Level Trade Books

Amy Minor

Central Grade School (Effingham, IL); Eastern Illinois University

Introduction

Jackie Robinson is a name students hear because he was the first African American to play Major League Baseball. In addition to this, there is much more about his life that children should be taught. Robinson used his actions, more precisely, lack of actions to help initiate change in America. He was a brave soul in a harsh world and his courageousness assisted change in a separated environment. With the emphasis on informational text in the English Language Arts Standards, trade books are a logical choice for educators to meet national and state initiatives. Trade books are condensed historical versions, so it is important to determine how the author portrays Jackie Robinson. This study and its findings assist educators in making informed decisions on trade books they select for their students.

Curricular Resources

Informational text plays an important role in building content knowledge of students. National standards encourage a balance between informational and literacy reading in the elementary grades (Common Core State Standards Initiative [CCSSI], 2010). The emphasis on informational text in the English Language Arts Standards for grades K-5 aligns with that within the various disciplines of the social studies (Griffin & Swan, 2013). Students read and write social studies information demonstrating their new knowledge and understandings in the discipline (D'Souza & Gleeson, 2016). Elementary teachers can reach these expectations by utilizing textbooks, documentaries, primary sources, and trade books (Bickford & Rich, 2014). Each of these curricular resources offers strengths and weaknesses within the classroom.

Textbooks are one instructional tool for teaching content area in elementary classrooms. There is a great deal of criticism of these books, their content, presentation, and level of difficulty (Bean, Hartman, & Zigmond, 1994). "Elementary social studies textbooks gave bland, homogeneous, and insufficient treatment to most topics" (Bean, et al., 1994, p. 217). Textbooks are costly and not differentiated for diverse reading levels. In the primary grades, kindergarten through second grade math and reading textbooks are abundant unlike discipline specific content (Ibid.). Along with the shift in the types of reading state and national initiatives require all students to compare and contrast two different texts on the same topic, which is impossible with simply a textbook's single narrative (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2013; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA] & CCSSO, 2010). Educators can enhance and expand knowledge on a given topic learned through textbooks by pairing specific documentaries with the student's textbook. Documentaries are another form of informational text used to meet national standards.



In social studies education, historical feature films and documentaries have been used in the teacher's curriculum for more than two decades (Buchanan, 2015). Using film can add action to a text which could be beneficial to students who struggle with reading comprehension (Barry, 2009). Documentaries, though, can be complex so it is difficult to find a resource that closely matches the age and ability of academically-diverse students (Barry, 2009). Documentaries are frequently used as a part of a larger framework of history thinking providing and presenting the counter narratives that disrupts dominant narratives to help students critique historical representations and omissions (Buchanan, 2015). The films contain a specific intent based off the producer and generally contain primary source evidence that make the film a valuable historical source (Buchanan, 2015). However, there are no elementary-level documentaries devoted to many topics. Educators could provide the primary sources presented in the film to enhance historical understanding on the given topic. Textbooks and documentaries are secondary resources and teachers could consider utilizing primary sources, which allow students access to artifacts of history.

Primary sources are as essential to historians as numbers are to mathematicians. Students, who are akin to apprentices, should be given discipline-specific materials. Educators can fill curriculum gaps using primary sources. The Library of Congress houses thousands of primary sources, which are free for classroom use. Teachers can use primary sources made available from local and state historical societies such as diaries and photographs to authenticate social studies in the elementary school classroom (Morgan-Fleming, Morris & Janisch, 2001). Primary sources assist students' understanding of a time period or event. Therefore, deepening student's perception of the past (Morgan & Rasinski, 2012). Primary sources in elementary grades allow students to experience firsthand history that connects them to a person, event, or time period (Morgan & Rasinski, 2012). Students can use historical evidence learned from reading the primary sources to assist in making a reasoned argument (Morgan-Fleming et al., 2001). Educators can select primary sources that are relevant to a particular topic in history and complement them with trade books at variety of levels to reach every student. However, most primary sources were written by adults—and intended for adults—decades or generations ago. Their prose and syntax needs significant modification to be accessible to young learners.

Current policies in education encourage teachers to expand the range of text types children read and write (Strachan, 2014). The CCSS informational text category includes an assortment of text types including biographies, autobiographies, books about history and social studies, and digital sources (Strachan, 2014). Trade books are often written in these different engaging formats on a wide range of topics (Palmer & Stewart, 2003). Students can be introduced to new vocabulary and concepts through trade books (Palmer & Stewart, 2003). "Research shows that given material that is too difficult to read, few students are able to sustain interest and motivation" (Frye, 2009). Therefore, teachers can benefit significantly by using trade books since they provide an in-depth look of a subject while accommodating various reading levels, unlike textbooks or documentaries. Teachers need to teach students at their individual reading instructional level. Trade books written as engaging narratives for young students can be located on numerous historical topics and are relatively inexpensive (Bickford & Rich, 2015). Out of these four curriculum resources, trade books appear to be the logical choice for elementary teachers to meet the mandated state and national expectations. Educators can find a significant amount of quality trade books on Jackie Robinson, but trade books' content should be aligned with age-appropriate versions of historians' understandings.



The History of Jackie Robinson

Jackie Robinson was a catalyst for change in Major League Baseball (MLB). His jersey number 42 was retired universally in 1997. Though he is renowned in MLB, his path to being honored was not an easy one.

Jack Roosevelt Robinson, known as Jackie, was born to Mallie and Jerry Robinson on January 31, 1919 in Southern Georgia (Duckett, 1995; Linge, 2007; Rampersad, 1997). Jackie became the youngest of five for his parents. He joined his siblings Frank, Edgar, Mack and Willa Mae on the plantation. Jackie's father left the family when he was six months old. Mallie decided to move her family to Pasadena California when Jackie was a little over one year old. As a child in Pasadena, the first episode of resentment towards blacks that affected Jackie directly occurred when he was eight years old. After a little white girl taunted him and Jackie responded to her with an insulting word, her father threw stones at Jackie until the mother stepped in and scolded her husband for fighting with a child (Rampersad, 1997). Young Jackie's first experience with racism was a powerful one.

In high school and college Jackie Robinson earned the title of star school athlete. After high school, he continued his education as well as performing as an outstanding athlete at Pasadena Junior College. Two years later, Robinson enrolled in UCLA. In the history of the university he was the first athlete to letter in four sports during the same season. However, during his college experience Robinson's color of his skin remained an obstacle as he continued to be eluded from top sports honors he deserved. UCLA campus is not only remembered as a place where Robinson excelled as an athlete it is also where he met his future wife. After two years, Robinson left UCLA, "I was convinced that no amount of education would help a black man get a job and I needed to relieve some of my mother's financial burdens" (Duckett, 1995, p. 11). At the time, Jackie Robinson saw no real future in athletics, none of the major leagues were integrated at this point (Linge, 2007) therefore he wanted to pursue a career as an athletic director to work with youngsters in the field of sports (Duckett, 1995).

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States was now at war. The U.S. government needed America to work together to win the war. Soldiers of all colors fought for the country but only black soldiers experienced new discrimination daily (Cooper, 1998). Jackie Robinson was ordered to report in March of 1942. Jim Crow segregation was prominent in the armed forces, for example Robinson was considered a prime candidate for Officer Candidate School but he was refused without explanation at first. In January 1943, he finally earned his gold bars signifying the rank of second lieutenant. Later in 1943, Lieutenant Robinson was asked to go overseas as a morale officer. Since he was on limited service—due to an ankle injury—he needed to sign a waiver relieving the Army of their responsibility if something happened to him. Robinson had to take a bus to a nearby Army hospital, the driver attempted to force him to move from the middle of the bus to the back. Robinson was aware that racial discrimination was not allowed on vehicles operated on an Army post so he refused the driver's command. Robinson faced several charges from this race-based incident. After a trial that lasted more than four hours, he was found "not guilty of all specifications and charges" (Rampersad, 1997). On November 28, 1944, Robinson received honorable discharge from the Army (Rampersad, 1997), "I was naïve about



the elaborate lengths to which racists in the Armed Forces would go to put a vocal black man in his place” (Duckett, 1995, p. 19). Robinson was once again reminded how racism controls his world.

After happily saying goodbye to Army life, Jackie Robinson searched for his next opportunity in life. A friend informed him that there was good money in baseball (Duckett, 1995). He joined the Negro Baseball League and became a player for the Kansas City Monarchs. As Robinson continued his career in baseball, Branch Rickey—the boss of the Brooklyn Dodgers—felt it was time for equality in baseball and wanted to capitalize on all the possible talent regardless of race (Duckett, 1995). After careful scouting, he picked Jackie Robinson as the player for his Nobel Experiment. He told Robinson, “I’m looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back” (Duckett, 1995, p. 33). Branch Rickey wanted Jackie Robinson to respond to racism the same nonviolent way Martin Luther King Jr and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi responded (Fischer, 2004; Yanko, 2014). Rickey knew that his plan would disrupt American social and legal policy. He was going to smash the unwritten segregation law in baseball. Jackie Robinson signed a contract to play with the Montreal Royals of the International League to start Rickey’s action plan. On February 10, 1946 Rachel Isum and Jackie Robinson married. Jackie’s childhood reverend and dear friend Karl Down performed the ceremony. Robinson played one hostile season with the Montreal Royals while facing seemingly endless hatred from fans as well as players.

On April 15, 1947, Robinson made his MLB debut as a Brooklyn Dodger. Even as a major-league baseball player he could not escape from Jim Crow laws. Whether it be where the team was eating or lodging the separation continued to be an obstacle in Robinson’s career. Not only were their everyday struggles, Robinson experienced excessive abuse during the beginning of his career. He received death threats, was forced to listen to vicious words from players, fans, and even opposing managers all without giving into the urge to respond. Persevering through all the brutal treatment, Robinson proved his athletic abilities and was voted rookie of the year. After more than two silent years on the field Jackie began to show his competitive spirit with the blessing of Rickey (Duckett, 1995; Linge, 2007). Jackie Robinson’s decade-long career with the Dodgers was full of clear animosity and notable achievements. He officially retired from MLB in 1957. Robinson using his platform and newly freed time, joined the Civil Rights Movement, fundraising and speaking in behalf of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). His name returned to the spotlight in baseball when he was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962 his first year of eligibility (Duckett, 1995; Linge, 2007; Rampersad, 1997).

Jackie and Rachel Robinson continued together and with others as civil rights activists. He argued and stood up for what he believed until his death in 1973. Jackie Robinson died from a heart attack. He is remembered in history not only for his baseball career but for his position in equality and breaking the color barrier.

Methods

When analyzing my selected data pool of children’s literature, I used qualitative content analysis research methodology (Krippendorff, 2013). To determine my data sample, I searched for all published children’s literature with Jackie Robinson as the main character. I located 116 trade books ranging significantly in



reading levels. In order to narrow my study, I only focused on primary and intermediate trade books. The content analysis tool I produced for my initial readings helped detect patterns that emerged in the primary and intermediate books. The questions were general and open ended because the focus was on what emerged with specific categories. After the initial readings were completed, I reviewed my tentative findings. I considered changes that could yield more precise patterns and revised my content analysis tool accordingly. Next, I reread the entire data pool using my adjusted content analysis tool (Table 1) to allow a more focused analysis. Findings were classified as explicit, minimized, or omitted.

Table 1	
<i>Content Analysis Tool</i>	
1.	Book's title, author's name, publication date, publication company
2.	Targeted grade/age range: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Primary (K-2) b. Intermediate (3-5)
3.	Genre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Historical fiction b. Non-fiction (biography, narrative non-fiction, expository, something else)
4.	Word Choice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tier 1 (e.g., mistreated) b. Tier 2 (e.g., segregation) c. Tier 3 (e.g., Jim Crow)
5.	How do the narratives characterize the origins of segregation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Unexplained. As something what just was, like the weather b. Explained but minimized. As something that whites initiated c. Explained in detail. As something whites initiated, maintained and benefited from
6.	Which issues were mentioned? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Social segregation b. Political segregation c. Economic segregation d. Armed Forces segregation
7.	Did the author present Jackie Robinson's experiences of segregation during his military career? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explicit b. Implicit, Vague, Minimized c. Omitted
8.	Are other Civil Rights leaders mentioned? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes b. No
9.	Did the author present any type of violence during Jackie's baseball career? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explicit b. Implicit, Vague, Minimized



- c. Omitted
10. If violence is present – who is doing it?
 - a. The crowd/fans
 - b. The opposing team
 - c. The opposing manager
 - d. Jackie's teammates
11. How do the authors characterize the first baseball league Jackie participated in?
 - a. Negro
 - b. Colored
 - c. African American
 - d. Black
 - e. Omitted
12. How is Branch Rickey characterized?
 - a. Benefiting from Jackie Robinson as an owner
 - b. Idealistic to end segregation
 - c. Both A & B
 - d. Something Different
 - e. Omitted
13. Was Jackie Robinson presented as a silent ballplayer during the beginning of his career?
 - a. Explicit
 - b. Implicit, Vague, Minimized
 - c. Omitted
14. Was Jackie Robinson presented as a strong outspoken voice later in his career?
 - a. Explicit
 - b. Implicit, Vague, Minimized
 - c. Omitted
15. How is Jackie Robinson's wife characterized?
 - a. Strong, positive contributing factor in his life
 - b. Mentioned but minimized
 - c. Omitted
16. Was Jackie Robinson's involvement in civil rights after his baseball career presented?
 - a. Explicit
 - b. Implicit, Vague, Minimized
 - c. Omitted
17. Did the author present Jackie's Robinsons induction into the Hall of Fame?
 - a. Explicit
 - b. Implicit, Vague. Minimized
 - c. Omitted
18. Was the banishing or decreasing Jim Crow laws in baseball present?
 - a. Explicit
 - b. Implicit, Vague, Minimized
 - c. Omitted



Since I was the only one who read the trade books it is possible that a pattern was missed. I conducted multiple readings of the data pool to reduce this chance. I also reevaluated the patterns I found.

Findings

The data pool included 44 primary and intermediate trade books on Jackie Robinson. Primary books target grades kindergarten to second and intermediate books range from third to fifth. I was able to locate 35, which became my data sample. A small portion of Jackie Robinson books on the market, fall under the primary grades age range. Five were included in the data sample.

Historical fiction children's books intertwine facts and fiction into the narrative. Quality historical fiction that is realistic and purposeful can bring history alive to the reader (McTigue, Thornton, & Wiese, 2013). Historical fiction and non-fiction books can provide the balance needed on a specific historical topic. Most children's books included in this study were some type of non-fiction ($n = 27$; 77%) and the rest were historical fiction ($n = 8$; 22%).

Non-fiction books can include all three tiers of vocabulary. Tier One vocabulary tends to be basic words such as *mistreated*. Tier Two words can have multiple meanings or are high frequency words like *segregation*. An example of a Tier Three, subject related and very specific vocabulary word is *Jim Crow*. In my findings, very few books ($n = 5$; 14%) had Tier Three vocabulary words within them. The majority of books included Tier One vocabulary words ($n = 17$; 48%) and Tier Two vocabulary words ($n = 13$; 37%).

Segregation is a concept that elementary students might struggle to understand. The origins of segregation are possibly unclear to young students. Consequently, their background knowledge on this topic could be minimal. Segregation was mentioned in 34 of the 35 books (97%). In all the books, the origins of segregation were unexplained and portrayed as something almost normal, like the weather ($n = 35$; 100%).

Segregation frustrated Jackie Robinson daily. Robinson wanted to help his mother with her financial burdens and left college to assist. As a black man, he struggled to find a career that allowed him to help. His athletic talents could have been used to earn his family money much earlier than 1947, but he was kept separated from professional sports due to his skin color. The types of segregation omitted—disregarded entirely—from the whole data sample were political and economic. Social segregation appeared in almost all the books ($n = 33$; 94%) and armed forces segregation was presented in more than half of the sample ($n = 19$; 54%).

Jackie Robinson had the potential to become an excellent leader in the army, but was barred by an army controlled by Jim Crow. He and other black soldiers were prevented from officer school for no apparent reason. The baseball team on the military base would not allow him to participate even though he was a great competitor. He even faced charges from a dispute on an army bus. Jackie Robinson's experiences of segregation during his military career were detailed explicitly in nearly half of the trade books ($n = 15$; 42%), as some minimized ($n = 6$; 17%) or omitted it ($n = 14$; 40%).



Some people believe that their own personal opinions—even racist ones—are always right and go out of their way to make them known. During Robinson's baseball career, many people used violence and violent speech to inform him that they did not think he belonged. From being verbally disrespected to receiving death threats, Jackie Robinson experienced a lot of hatred from others. The authors in more than half of the books explicitly specify types of violence that occurred during his baseball career ($n = 24$; 68%), some authors minimized the violence ($n = 9$; 25%), and a small portion omitted it entirely ($n = 2$; 5%).

Before Robinson caused uproar as the first black athlete in professional baseball, he was a member of another baseball league. This baseball league had multiple names given to it over the years. The trade books in the randomly-selected data sample also used a variety of names for this baseball organization. Negro league was the most common name used ($n = 23$; 65%). A small portion of the books called the baseball league a black league ($n = 6$; 17%), one book used the name African American when discussing the league ($n = 1$; 2%), while some books omitted this section in Jackie's life ($n = 6$; 17%).

Branch Rickey, the president of the Brooklyn Dodgers decided to find a black athlete to bring into his organization. He believed that they could assist his team while making a breakthrough to smash the unwritten law that kept blacks out of professional baseball (Duckett, 1995). A small percent of the data sample included both idealistic to end segregation and benefiting from Jackie Robinson as an owner as the reasons Branch Rickey wanted Robinson ($n = 7$; 20%) an even smaller percent only included benefiting from Jackie Robinson as an owner ($n = 3$; 8%) most books concluded that Branch Rickey was idealistic to end segregation ($n = 15$; 42%). Some of the trade books omitted Branch Rickey altogether ($n = 7$; 20%) and a few suggested something different than the above reasons ($n = 3$; 8%).

For Jackie Robinson's entrance into professional baseball to go as smoothly as Branch Rickey was hoping he asked him to be silent during the beginning of his career. He told Jackie, "I'm looking for a ball player with guts enough not to fight back" (Rampersad, 1997, p. 126). He knew if Robinson reacted to the violence and opinions of others he could delay breaking the color barrier. This was detailed explicitly in a small portion of trade books ($n = 7$; 20%) as most minimized ($n = 16$; 45%) or omitted it ($n = 12$; 34%). Branch Rickey gave Jackie Robinson permission to respond or talk back after more than two years of silence. A large percent of the trade books omitted that Jackie Robinson was a strong outspoken voice later in his baseball career ($n = 26$; 74%), one book was vague about it ($n = 1$; 2%), and a small amount described it explicitly ($n = 8$; 22%).

Once Robinson retired from baseball he continued to be outspoken and became involved in civil rights. He personally committed to working towards social justice. The trade books used in the random sample were almost balanced on this topic. Jackie's involvement in civil rights was explicit in 13 books ($n = 13$; 37%), minimized in 10 ($n = 10$; 28%), and omitted in 12 ($n = 12$; 34%). Jackie Robinson and his wife Rachel fought alongside other civil rights leaders including Martin Luther King. A higher percent of the trade books did not include other civil rights leaders ($n = 22$; 62%) than ones that did include other leaders ($n = 13$; 37%).

The success of Jackie Robinson becoming the first African American to play in the major leagues helped other African Americans become a part of an organization. The banishing or decreasing Jim Crow laws in



baseball were explicitly stated ($n = 14$; 40%), implicitly or vaguely included ($n = 10$; 28%), and omitted ($n = 11$; 31%) in comparable portions.

Jackie Robinson credits his wife Rachel for being a strong support system for him. He praised her for being a tough hardworking lady. In most of the trade books used for this study Rachel Robinson was mentioned but minimized ($n = 18$; 51%) or omitted ($n = 14$; 40%) she was only characterized as a strong positive contribution to his life in 3 books ($n = 3$; 8%).

Jackie Robinson was inducted into Baseball Hall of Fame the first year he was eligible. His baseball career will always be remembered as a successful career. Most books state his accomplishment explicitly ($n = 23$; 65%), a few minimized it ($n = 5$; 14%), and others omitted his accomplishment ($n = 7$; 20%).

Discussion

To reach all their students, educators must differentiate instruction. Teachers meet students at their personal instructional reading level where the child can accurately decode and comprehend the text. Schools districts use different programs to determine each individual child's level for success, which vary tremendously. Elementary teachers need a variety of books with reading levels—ranging from primary to intermediate—available for their students. Though there are more intermediate books on this topic, I could locate five primary books.

Every individual student tends to gravitate and excel with certain reading genres. Non-fiction books might be a new challenge to emergent readers and historical fiction could spark them to want to know more. The eight historical fiction books used in this study could help supplement the students who struggle with non-fiction.

Using different genres within the classroom is one way to incorporate new vocabulary. Vocabulary instruction is needed to fully comprehend non-fiction text (Kuhn, McCarty, Montgomery, Rausch, & Rule, 2017). In this study, few books used Tier Three vocabulary words. Teachers need to use different strategies to familiarize students with the Tier Two vocabulary. After going over the definition of segregation the teacher could group students to look at different images, read different definitions of segregation, and determine if each photograph illustrates the vocabulary word segregation. These examples could come from textbooks, documentaries, primary sources, and other trade books. Once complete, the teacher could discuss all examples with the whole class. This activity could familiarize students with different types of segregation as well as strengthen their understanding of segregation. Vocabulary development is a critical factor in comprehending the text.

Jackie Robinson's life story is intertwined with segregation. It was startling that every single book omitted the origins of segregation. Social segregation is mentioned in the vast majority of trade books. Armed forces segregation was also a topic in more than half, but *surprisingly* not all, books in the sample. Educators can supplement materials to teach the necessary background knowledge students need to better understand different types of segregation. Teachers could use the same examples from the above activity but have



students distinguish different types of segregation (e.g. social, political, economic, or army forces). Knowing that Robinson broke the color barrier in baseball is not enough; students should understand distinct types of segregation to show its pernicious and ubiquitous nature.

The United States was forced to join the war after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Robinson was drafted in 1942. At that time, Jim Crow laws kept white soldiers and black soldiers from having the same rights. Jackie Robinson was one of many black soldiers that experienced segregation even though their lives were all at risk. They were expected to fight in Europe, Africa, and Asia, but were not allowed to eat in certain places in America. Teachers could show students where he was stationed on a map while they are teaching segregation to them.

Jackie Robinson endured a lot for being the first African American to play professional baseball. Many citizens resented him and did not think he belonged. He experienced offensive language, physical attacks, and even death threats. A large portion of the books explicitly state different types of violence that occurred during Robinson's baseball career. Teachers, especially in the elementary grades, must determine the depictions of violence they are willing to teach their particular age group.

Violence emerged from fans, the opposing team, opposing manager, and by Robinson's own teammates. Students need to understand a wide assortment of people expressed enmity in different ways. They should also be aware that not all white people did so; some wanted him to be successful. Teachers could make a chart organizing the different individuals that were violent towards him on one side or supportive of him on the other. Under the violent side an example would be Ben Chapman, and Pee Wee Reese would fit under the supportive side. Instead of writing their name it would be beneficial to print out pictures of the people so students can see that most, if not all, individuals on the violent side were white.

Branch Rickey, president of the Brooklyn Dodgers, was one white citizen particularly supportive of Jackie Robinson. Rickey was idealistic to work to end segregation and a prudent businessman to locate the best athletes to build his organization. Students can learn how Robinson helped Rickey overcome unwritten segregation laws of professional baseball. Some authors decided to omit Branch Rickey even though he was essential to Robinson's journey into the big leagues. Robinson played in a different baseball league when Rickey found him, a league that has had multiple name changes but is officially called the Negro Leagues. Seven books called it something else and six books omitted this time in Robinson's life entirely. To fully comprehend how Jackie Robinson helped change history for other black athletes, students should be able to both distinguish and articulate the difference between the Negro League and Professional Baseball League. A Venn Diagram would be a great tool to show the differences, as well as the similarities of the two leagues. Students will be able to see that the Negro League players worked just as hard but for much less pay and honor. The players in the professional league experienced an easier life style.

Jackie Robinson was chosen to help Branch Rickey improve his team and break the color barrier in baseball. Rickey knew segregation prevented talent from matriculating to the big leagues. Rickey insisted Robinson initially remain silent in the face of horrible treatment. This expectation continued throughout the beginning of Robinson's baseball career. Educators can teach this part of history and its significance by



using one of the seven books that did detail—as a model text—educators can position students to determine why silence was needed.

The success of Jackie Robinson's career was a major factor in ending Jim Crow baseball. Organizations saw how they could benefit from signing black athletes. Many other teams signed Negro League players once the Dodgers hired Robinson, which is noted in all but eleven trade books. Educators can include the timelines of professional baseball while comparing other aspects of segregation during the same years. Teachers could also show different baseball cards of black athletes in the professional leagues to examine their debut year.

Once the color barrier in baseball began to demolish, Jackie Robinson was given permission to speak out by Branch Rickey. He stood up to the umpires and to the media. Robinson became involved in civil rights once he retired from baseball. He and his wife Rachel assisted other civil rights leaders. He believed that America had numerous areas for improvement. Jackie Robinson used his platform to help make a difference for others. Teachers need to show Jackie Robinson from various angles, which can be done through incorporation of primary documents. He means much more than a famous baseball player to history.

Jackie's wife, Rachel, was a devoted, diligent woman. She was only characterized as a strong positive contribution in three trade books. Educators will need to fill in this gap because he credits Rachel for being his support system. Teachers could include materials specifically written on Rachel. Not only was she Jackie's wife she was also a nurse, a mother, and a civil rights leader. She continued to be a positive strong woman even after Jackie passed.

Jackie Robinson became the first African American inducted into the Hall of Fame. He was inducted the first year he was eligible. Seven trade books omit this prestigious honor. Being selected into the Hall of Fame is the highest respect in baseball. This event can be easily incorporated into books that omit or minimize it if the teacher selects relevant newspapers and photographs.

Conclusion

Educational expectations are changing as students' ability gaps are not diminishing. Trade books appear more essential now than ever, and this recognizes their traditionally prominent position. Publisher's or distributors' websites guide teachers' selection of books based on topic and reading ability, yet do not report each book's historical representation about particular elements. This article fills that gap for Jackie Robinson-based trade books intended for primary and elementary students.



References

- Barry, B. (2009). The real stuff: Using documentaries to teach non-fiction writing. *Screen Education*, 53, 76-82.
- Bean, R. M., Hartman, D. K. & Zigmond, N. (1994). Adapted use of social studies textbooks in elementary classrooms. *Remedial and Special Education*, 15(4), 216-226.
- Bickford, J. H., & Rich, C. (2015). The historical representation of Thanksgiving within primary- and intermediate-level children's literature. *Journal of Children's Literature*, 41(1), 5-21.
- Bickford, J. H., & Silva, K. A. (2016). Trade books' historical representation of Anne Sullivan Macy, the miracle worker. *Social Studies Research & Practice*, 11(1), 56-72.
- Buchanan, L. B. (2015). Fostering historical thinking toward civil rights movement counter-narratives: Documentary film in elementary social studies. *The Social Studies*, 106(2), 47-56. doi: 10.1080/00377996.2014.973012
- Cooper, M. L. (1998). *The double V campaign African Americans and World War II*. New York, NY: Lodestar Books.
- Diller, D. (2005). *Practice with purpose literacy work stations for grades 3-6*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- D'Souza, L. A. & Gleeson, A. M. (2016). Reframing a social studies methods course: Preparing elementary teacher candidates for the common core. *The Social Studies*, 107(5), 165-170.
- Duckett, A. (1995). *I never had it made*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Frye, E. M. (2009). Integrating instructional-level social studies trade books for struggling readers in upper elementary grades. *Illinois Reading Council Journal*, 37(4), 3-13.
- Fischer, L. (2004). *Life of Mahatma Gandhi*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Griffin, S., & Swan, K. (2013). Beating the odds: The college, career, and civic life (C3) framework for social studies state standards. *Social Education*, 77(6), 317-321.
- Krippendorff, K. (2013). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Sage Publishing.



- Kuhn, K. E., McCarty, T. G., Montgomery, S. E., Rausch, C. M. & Rule, A. C. (2017). Utilizing nonfiction texts to enhance reading comprehension and vocabulary in primary grades. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45(2), 285-296. doi: 10.1007/s10643-015-0763-9
- Linge, M. K. (2007). *Jackie Robinson a biography*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- McTigue, E., Thornton, E., & Wiese, P. (2013). Authentication projects for historical fiction do you believe it?. *The Reading Teacher*, 66(6), 495-505. doi: 10.1002/TRTR.1132
- Morgan-Fleming, B., Morris, R. V., & Janisch, C. (2001). The diary of Calvin Fletcher – using primary sources in the elementary classroom. *The Social Studies*, 92(4), 151-153.
- Morgan, D. N. & Rasinski, T. V. (2012). The power and potential of primary sources. *The Reading Teacher*, 65(8), 584-594. doi: 10.1002/TRTR.01086
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects*. Washington, DC: Authors
- Palmer, R. G. & Stewart, R. A. (2003). Nonfiction trade book use in primary grades. *The Reading Teacher*, 57(1), 38-48.
- Rampersad, A. (1997). *Jackie Robinson a biography*. New York, NY: The Random House Publishing Group.
- Strachan, S. L., (2014). Expanding the range of text types used in the primary grades. *The Reading Teacher*, 68(4), 303-311. doi: 10.1002/trtr.1302
- Yanko, J. J. (2014). *Misremembering Dr. King: Revisiting the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.



Appendix A – Data Pool

Primary Books

- Haldy, E. (2017). *My itty-bitty bio Jackie Robinson*. Ann Arbor, MI: Cherry Lake Publishing.
- Greene, C. (1990). *Jackie Robinson baseball's first black major-leaguer*. Danbury, CT: Children's Press.
- Gutman, D. (2006). *Jackie Robinson and the big game*. New York, NY: Aladdin Paperbacks.
- Martin, I. (2014). *Jackie Robinson*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.
- Schaefer, L. (2003). *Jackie Robinson*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.

Intermediate Books

- Adler, D. (1994). *A picture book of Jackie Robinson*. New York, NY: Holiday House.
- Carlson Berne, E. (2016). *What's your story, Jackie Robinson?* Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publishing Group.
- Cohen, B. (1974). *Thank you, Jackie Robinson*. New York, NY: William Morrow & Company.
- Davidson, M. (1988). *The story of Jackie Robinson, bravest man in baseball*. New York, NY: Random House Children's Books.
- Dunn, J. (2008). *Jackie Robinson*. Edina, MN: ABDO Publishing Group.
- Farrell, E. (1992). *Young Jackie Robinson*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Feinstein, S. (2005). *Read about Jackie Robinson*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers.
- Ford, C. (2006). *Jackie Robinson hero of baseball*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers.
- Frost, H. (2004). *Let's meet Jackie Robinson*. Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publishers.
- Glaser, J. (2006). *Jackie Robinson baseball's great pioneer*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.
- Golenbock, P. (1990). *Teammates*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Gutman, D. (1999). *Jackie & me*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Herman, G. (2010). *Who was Jackie Robinson?* New York, NY: Penguin Random House.
- Jones Prince, A. (2008). *Jackie Robinson he led the way*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.
- Knox, B. (2004). *Jackie Robinson*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.



- Krensky, S. (2011). *Play ball, Jackie!* Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publishing Group.
- Lorbiecki, M. (2006). *Jackie's bat.* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Macceca, S. (2011). *Jackie Robinson hero on the baseball field.* Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials.
- Mara, W. (2014). *Jackie Robinson.* New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Meltzer, B. (2015). *I am Jackie Robinson.* New York, NY: Scholastic.
- O'Connor, J. (1989). *Jackie Robinson and the story of all-black baseball.* New York, NY: Random House Children's Books.
- Robinson, S. (2009). *Testing the ice.* New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Robinson, S. (2013). *Jackie Robinson American hero.* New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Robinson, S. (2016). *The hero two doors down.* New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Rudeen, K. (1971). *Jackie Robinson.* New York, NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Company.
- Sammartino McPherson, S. (2010). *Jackie Robinson.* Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publishing Group.
- Uhlberg, M. (2005). *Dad, Jackie and me.* Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers.
- Walker, S. (2002). *Jackie Robinson.* Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publishing Group.
- Wilmore, K. (2004). *Jackie Robinson.* Boston, MA: Learning Challenge.
- Saddleback Educational Publishing (2008). *Jackie Robinson.* Costa Mesa, CA: Saddleback Educational Publishing.